CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

INFORMATION REPORT

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COUNTRY Korea

SUBJECT Kŭmtŏk, Musan and Aoji Mines, North Korea

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Kŭmtŏk Lead and Zinc Mines

1. The Kŭmtŏk Mines are in an area southwest of Chuch'o-dong (N 40-56, E 128-47)(DA-81329 One shaft at point DA-812297 produces lead ore, and another at point DA-813291 produces zinc. The mines operate 24 hours a day in three 8-hour shifts starting at 7 a.m. About 15 miners work on each shift in the lead mine, and about 20 miners work on each shift in the zinc mine. Two men in each mine operate trolleys which hold about a ton of ore each. The ore from the lead mine is emptied from the trolley about 2 meters from the mouth of the shaft. From this spot the ore rolls down an 8-meter incline to a stockpile where it is loaded onto trucks for transportation to the Yŏngha Railroad Station (N 41-16, E 128-42) (DA-746683) for shipment to the USSR. In the same manner the ore from the zinc mine is dumped from a point about 20 meters south of the mine shaft. The zinc ore is transported by truck to the Yongyang (N 40-54, E 128-51) (DA-874271) Railroad Station for shipment to the USSR. The lead mine produces about 140 tons of ore and the zinc mine about 72 tons daily. The lead ore has been assayed at about 70 percent and the zinc ore at about 50 to 60 percent.

2. The compressor room for the Kŭmtŏk Mines is in a wooden tin-roofed building 20 meters long, 8 meters wide, and 3.5 meters high, at point DA-812291. The walls and roof of the building are painted with coal tar. Four steel air tanks, each about 2 meters in diameter and 2.5 meters high are in the building. Air pipes measuring about 8 centimeters in diameter lead from these tanks to the zinc mine,

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which is approximately 100 meters east of the building. The air is used to supply oxygen to the miners and to run the air hammers used in the mining operation. There are no air pipes leading to the lead mine shaft. The compressors are run by an electric motor of undetermined size which is housed in the same building with the tanks. For use in case of power failure there are three emergency power sources. Each of these [redacted] is capable of supplying 36 volts of direct current from six 6-volt batteries which are housed in trailers about the size of 2½-ton trucks.[3] This emergency power equipment arrived at the Yongha Railroad Station from the USSR about 3 September 1952. On 17 September the trailers were camouflaged with pine branches. 25X1

3. Until mid-April 1952 the ore had been transported to a refinery for processing before it was shipped to the USSR. This refinery was in a tin-roofed building 50 meters long, 40 meters wide, and 7 meters high, at point DA-846292.[4] In the latter half of April, however, the refinery suffered a bombing attack which resulted in partial destruction of the building. After this attack the plant could refine only about a third of the ore produced at the mines. The remainder was shipped to the USSR as raw ore. There were about 60 laborers and technicians, two-thirds of them women, working at the refinery. In early August the tin roof was removed from the refinery building in order to make it appear completely destroyed. Some of the machinery was still operating until 28 September, when the building received a direct bomb hit which put all the machinery out of operation. In October 1952, all the ore was being shipped to the USSR in its raw state. In early October plans were being made to build an underground refinery at an undetermined site. Construction of the underground plant was to begin during November.

4. Prior to 5 August 1952 a cable car system transported raw lead and zinc ore from a building about 10 meters south of the zinc mine shaft opening to another building directly southeast of the refinery. Both of these buildings had tin roofs, were painted with coal tar, and were 20 meters long, 6 meters wide, and 3.5 meters high. The cable system was used to transport ore from both the zinc and the lead mine shafts. The lead ore was brought to the cable cars by way of the zinc shaft on an underground trolley which connected the two shafts. On 5 August a cable tower which stood about 30 meters south of the refinery, was damaged by air attack. During the 10 days it took to repair the damage, raw ore was transported to the refinery in trucks belonging to the mines. Repairs were completed by 16 August, but because of a power shortage, the cable cars could be used only 3 hours daily. Trucks were used to transport the greater portion of the ore to the refinery. During the 28 September attack which destroyed the refinery, 3 steel cable towers were also destroyed. On 14 October the cable car system was still inoperable.

5. Prior to 5 August 1952, refined zinc ore was piped under water pressure to a plot of ground surrounded by sandbags which was at point DA-844293, about 150 meters northwest of the refinery. Another plot of ground of the same type, which was not being used in October, was at point DA-844294, about 150 meters north of the other plot. The refined ore was carried from the first of these two storage pools[5] to a tin-roofed wooden building which was 20 meters long, 7 meters wide, and 3 meters high. A cable car system connected the building with the Yongyang Railroad Station about 3 kilometers away. After the air attack of 5 August this cable car system ceased operations. On 14 October it had not resumed operations. In October, about 2,000 tons of refined zinc ore remained in the storage pool.

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6. About 20 Soviet technical advisers are at the Kŭmtŏk Mines. Five of these advisers direct the work at the refinery; the rest supervise mining operations and direct the search for new ore veins. The refinery advisers live in a stone house built against the mountainside at DA-846299. A tunnel behind the house is used as a shelter during air raids. Inside the house the advisers wear their own civilian clothing but when they go to the refinery they wear hemp work clothes so that from a distance they cannot be distinguished from the Korean laborers. All 5 advisers appear to be about 30 years old. They have a Korean interpreter about 25 years old who speaks the Hamgyŏng Province dialect. The interpreter is with the advisers constantly. The other 15 advisers live in a stone house at DA-811290. The air raid shelter for this house is also a tunnel dug into the mountain behind the building. Each of the 15 advisers has 2 Korean assistants, young men in their early twenties who had been trained at the Kŭmtŏk Training Center at DA-816293. The office of the searching unit is in a small building about 7 meters north of the residence of its members.

7. On 19 October 1952 a unit of the Ministry of Internal Affairs Security Section was on duty in the Kŭmtŏk Mines area to guard against the infiltration of South Korean guerrillas. The guerrillas were believed to be at Osong Mountain (approximately DA-608303), about 10 miles southwest of the mines. About 80 security guards were assigned to the mining area.

8. About 30 of these guards were stationed in the vicinity of Sindŏk-ni (approximately N 40-55, E 128-48) near the refinery. The Sindŏk-ni guards maintain an office and billet in a Japanese-style house. The other 50 guards were stationed at Yongch'ŏn-ni (N 41-06, E 128-46) (DA-809494). This detachment had an office and quarters in a log and mud house. This building was surrounded by barbed wire. A vehicle check-point in front of the building operated 24 hours a day. Another building of the same type but without the barbed wire fence stood nearby. One guard was stationed in front of each of these 2 buildings. The man guarding the office and quarters was armed with a Soviet Mossin-Nagant rifle and the one stationed in front of the other building was armed with a PPSh.

9. Just south of the vehicle check-point was an office with quarters for the military police section of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. There was one guard stationed in front of the building, armed with a Chinese 11 mm sub-machine gun, Type 36 (sic).

10. All security guards were armed with one or another of the following weapons while on duty: Chinese 11 mm sub-machine gun; Soviet Mossin-Nagant rifle; or PPSh-41. In addition, all officers above the grade of junior lieutenant carried pistols of an undetermined type and every third man carried 2 hand grenades. These weapons were Soviet F-1 defensive hand grenades and Chinese stick hand grenades.

25X1X **Musan Iron Mine at Kangsŏn-dŏng**

11. On 9 December 1952 the Musan Iron Mine at Kangsŏn-dŏng (approximately N 42-12, E 129-19, EB-2672) was producing about 3,500 tons of iron ore daily.

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There were 3,500 workers, 500 of them women.[6] The ore was being smelted in Ch'ongjin. This mine was under the general supervision of the Control Department of the North Korean Ministry of Industry.

25X1X **Aoji Coal Mine at Hoeam-dong**

[redacted] **12.** As of 20 November 1952 the Aoji (N 42-21, E 130-24) (FC-1508) Coal Mine at Hoeam-dong (N 42-31, E 130-21) (FC-1108) was employing 2,900 workers, 300 of them women. The daily production was more than 1,000 tons of lignite-type coal. Most of this coal was being transported to Songjin (N 40-40, E 129-12) (EA-1701) where it was used to furnish power for dynamos. The coal mine was under the general control of the North Hamgyŏng Coal Control Department.

25X1A 1. [redacted] Comment. This may be part of the mining area known as the Kŏmdŏk Lead and Zinc Mines. According to earlier information, the Kŏmdŏk lead, zinc, copper and gold mines are between DA-8534 and DA-8438 with an additional shaft at DA-8434.

25X1A 2. [redacted] Comment. This would have to be concentrated ore. Raw lead ore ordinarily assays between 5 and 6 percent.

25X1A 3. [redacted] Comment. Thirty-six volts direct current does not seem reasonable since the heavy electrical equipment described would not normally operate at such low voltage. More likely, all three 36-volt sources are combined in a single circuit to produce 108 volts of direct current.

25X1A 4. [redacted] Comment. This is probably the Sindŏk Refinery (approximately N 40-55, E 128-48) [redacted] The Yoyang Railroad Station mentioned in this earlier report is probably the Yongyang Station. 25X1A

25X1A 5. [redacted] Comment. This pool is probably used for further refining the ore rather than for storing.

25X1A 6. [redacted] Comment. [redacted] 800 workers were transferred from the Kungsim Coal Mines at Hoeryong (N 42-26, E 129-45) to the Musan Mines in late September 1952. 25X1A

25X1A [redacted] located the Musan Mines at EB-3060.

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